

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

Sub
a,

- 1 1. A method of providing a call forwarding service,
2 comprising:
3 storing information on the amount of time a
4 telephone is allowed to ring before a call to the
5 telephone is forwarded; and
6 forwarding a call to said telephone after the
7 telephone rings for said amount of time.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 means for allowing a call forwarding service
3 subscriber to set the amount of time said telephone is
4 allowed to ring before a call to said telephone is
5 forwarded.
- 1 3. The method of claim 2, wherein the stored
2 information is a ring count and wherein said means for
3 allowing a call forwarding service subscriber to set the
4 amount of time said telephone is allowed to ring includes
5 an interface for receiving ring count information from
6 said service subscriber via a telephone.
- 1 4. The method of claim 2, wherein the stored
2 information is a ring count and wherein said means for
3 allowing a call forwarding service subscriber to set the
4 amount of time said telephone is allowed to ring includes

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5 an interface for receiving ring count information from
6 said service subscriber via the Internet.

1 5. The method of claim 1 wherein storing information on
2 the amount of time a telephone is allowed to ring before
3 a call to the telephone is forwarded includes:

4 receiving ring count information from a
5 telephone service subscriber; and
6 storing the ring count information in a call
7 processing record.

1 6. The method of claim 5, further comprising:

2 a voice mail system the voice mail system
3 including:

4 means for interfacing with said telephone
5 service subscriber; and

6 means for modifying the stored ring count
7 information in the call processing record.

1 7. The method of claim 1, wherein prior to forwarding
2 said call the method further comprises:

3 setting a trigger on a telephone line coupled
4 to said telephone;

5 in response to activation of said trigger by a
6 call directed to said telephone, sending a message to a
7 service control point;

8 receiving a control message from said service
9 control point; and

10 in response to said message setting a timer
11 used to measure the amount of time the telephone rings.

1 8. The method of claim 7, further comprising:
2 in response to the timer reaching said amount
3 of time a telephone is allowed to ring, sending another
4 message to the service control point; and
5 receiving a message from the service control
6 point including a telephone number to be used to forward
7 said call.

1 9. The method of claim 7, further comprising:
2 operating the service control point to use a
3 next event list to determine the telephone number to be
4 used to forward said call.

1 10. A call forwarding method, the method comprising:
2 storing in a call processing record information
3 on the amount of time a telephone is allowed to ring
4 before being forwarded;
5 monitoring the amount of time said telephone is
6 allowed to ring in response to a call; and
7 forwarding said call when said call goes
8 unanswered for said amount of time.

1 11. The call forwarding method of claim 10, wherein the
2 step of monitoring the amount of time said telephone is
3 allowed to ring includes:

4 setting a timer at a telephone switch which is
5 coupled to said telephone.

1 12. The call forwarding method of claim 11, wherein said
2 timer is a next event list timer.

1 13. The call forwarding method of claim 11, wherein the
2 step of forwarding said call includes the step of:

3 operating a service control point coupled to
4 said telephone switch to cause said telephone switch to
5 forward the call to a telephone number indicated by a
6 next event list included in said CPR.

1 14. The call forwarding method of claim 13, further
2 comprising the step of:

3 receiving said information on the amount of
4 time a telephone is allowed to ring from a telephone
5 service subscriber.

1 15. The call forwarding method of claim 14, wherein said
2 information is a ring count which indicates the number of
3 times a phone is allowed to ring before said call is
4 forwarded.

1 16. The call forwarding method of claim 15, wherein
2 receiving said information includes:

3 receiving the ring count from the telephone
4 service subscriber via the Internet.

1 17 The call forwarding method of claim 15, wherein
2 receiving said information includes:
3 receiving the ring count from the telephone
4 service subscriber in the form of DTMF input.

1 18. A telephone system capable of forwarding a call,
2 comprising:
3 a telephone for receiving calls;
4 a service control point including information
5 on the amount of time said telephone should be allowed to
6 ring before forwarding a call directed to said telephone
7 to another destination; and
8 a telephone switch coupled to said control
9 point and to said telephone for detecting the amount of
10 time said telephone rings and for forwarding calls.

1 19. The telephone system of claim 18, further
2 comprising:
3
4 a plurality of call processing records stored
5 at said service control point, one of said call
6 processing records corresponding to said telephone and
7 including said information on the amount of time said
8 telephone should be allowed to ring.

1 20. The telephone system of claim 19, wherein said
2 information is ring count information.

1 21. The telephone system of claim 20, further comprising
2 means for allowing a telephone service subscriber to set
3 the ring count information in the call processing record
4 corresponding to said telephone.

1 22. The telephone system of claim 20, wherein said means
2 for allowing includes:
3 an interactive voice response peripheral device
4 coupled to said service control point.

1 23. The telephone system of claim 22, wherein said means
2 for allowing includes:
3 an Internet access server coupled to said
4 service control point.

1 24. The telephone system of claim 22, wherein said means
2 for allowing further includes:
3 a voice mail peripheral device including an
4 interface for allowing said telephone service subscriber
5 to modify the ring count information in said service
6 control point.